



OPCW

Executive Council

Ninety-Ninth Session

8 – 10 March 2022

EC-99/NAT.33

8 March 2022

ENGLISH and FRENCH only

ALGERIA

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR SALIMA ABDELHAK
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA TO THE OPCW
AT THE NINETY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Mr Director-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to begin by extending my heartfelt congratulations to H.E. Ambassador Eniola Olaitan Ajayi, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nigeria to the OPCW, on her election as Chairperson of the Ninety-Ninth Session of the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). I extend to her the assurances of my personal support and that of my delegation, and express our complete willingness to actively contribute to the success of our work.

I should like to congratulate and thank the Director-General of the Organisation, Ambassador Fernando Arias, for his report, and commend his unfailing efforts in carrying out his duties to help the Organisation achieve its objectives.

My thanks also go out to the members of the Technical Secretariat (“the Secretariat”) for their cooperation and efficiency in organising the sessions of the OPCW policy-making organs and in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention (“the Convention”), despite the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Algerian delegation aligns itself with the statement of H.E. Ambassador Mr Fikrat Akhundov, Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the OPCW, on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and China, and with that of H.E. Ambassador Vusimuzi Philemon Madonsela, the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the OCPW, on behalf of the African Group.

Algeria fully subscribes to the principles, objectives, and spirit of the Convention, and reiterates its commitment to the multilateral disarmament system of which the OPCW is a part, and to contributing to the global effort to achieve a world free from weapons of mass destruction.

We condemn any use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any circumstances, and at the same time commend the major achievements in Convention implementation, in particular with regard to the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles.



Today, the Organisation faces new threats, including chemical terrorism, transnational crime, and the illicit trafficking of chemical weapons. The activities of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism have allowed us to gain a better grasp of these threats. Accordingly, the OPCW would benefit from developing appropriate response strategies at the global, regional, and national level.

The preparations for the Fifth Review Conference scheduled for May 2023 constitute an opportunity in this regard. Taking stock of the Organisation's accomplishments and identifying the various challenges and threats will help us to map out a future strategy that takes them all into account.

We also welcome the establishment at this session of the open-ended working group tasked with preparing this important event, and express the full willingness of our delegation to help bring its work to a successful conclusion.

Indeed, Algeria has always demonstrated its determination and commitment to fighting against security threats and to working to consolidate peace and stability in our region and throughout the world. This can be seen in its commitment to the objectives of the OPCW and in its active contribution to the work of the Organisation since it was established.

Our country's commitment can also be seen in the efforts made by the relevant Algerian authorities responsible for implementing the Convention at the national level. These institutions have capitalised on their proven track record in their field, which has benefitted the countries in our region and subregion. Algeria's work in this regard is well under way, either by participating in or jointly organising seminars or other OPCW events for experts from the African continent.

This is why my country supports the Organisation's efforts aimed at creating regional centres of excellence on the African continent. I take this opportunity to reiterate Algeria's full willingness to host the centre for the North Africa and Sahel region. Such an initiative is intended to strengthen cooperation between the countries in the region and to improve the performance of their national entities.

In this connection, we welcome the launch, in cooperation with the Secretariat, of the twinning project between the National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology of the National Gendarmerie and the German Research Institute for Protective Technologies and Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Protection.

This project is aimed at helping the Algerian institute join the list of OPCW designated laboratories, and at strengthening its capabilities through the acquisition of adequate tools in order to discharge its missions.

Along the same lines, Algeria looks forward to the 2023 completion of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology (ChemTech Centre), which it considers essential to Convention implementation, particularly in terms of capacity building for developing countries, especially in Africa. My country's voluntary contribution to help fund this project demonstrates its support and desire to take part in its success.

It should be recalled that the spirit of consensus and cooperation that has characterised the work of the OPCW since its establishment won it the Nobel Prize in 2013. It is therefore crucial to preserve all of the work undertaken to achieve the objectives laid down in the Convention in the same spirit of responsible and consensus-based cooperation.

This spirit should underpin work on all issues, including Syria, by encouraging the continuation of constructive and productive contact between the Syrian authorities and the Secretariat. In order to find appropriate solutions that can settle the outstanding issues once and for all, my delegation recommends further dialogue, and encourages the negotiation of controversial issues, in the interest of Convention implementation.

Finally, my delegation believes that the guiding principle behind our collective action should be the implementation of the Convention and its objectives in a fair and balanced manner, in order that the various regions benefit from its advantages. Our efforts must also be focused on the peaceful uses of chemistry and on the achievement of the development goals of our countries.

Strengthening international cooperation, assistance, and the exchange of experiences are all priorities. In this connection, we welcome the inclusion, at the initiative of the African Group, of a recommendation in the decision on the OPCW biennial Programme and Budget (2022–2023), adopted by the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Sixth Session, inviting the States Parties and the Secretariat to work together to ensure complete and effective implementation of cooperation programmes by considering appropriate measures, including the retention of unspent funds for cooperation programmes in a special fund.

Particular attention must be paid to the African continent and to the capacity building of its national entities, who truly need this to tackle the difficulties it faces. In this regard, I should like to underscore the importance of continuing and consolidating the OPCW Programme to Strengthen Cooperation with Africa, currently in its fifth phase, and the need to make preparations for its next phase, beginning in 2023. We consider that this programme should be given appropriate funding, through the allocation of sufficient resources at regular and predictable levels in the Organisation's regular budget.

I cannot miss this opportunity to call for the promotion of better representation of African candidates within the bodies of the Organisation, which still falls short of expected levels, especially in the Secretariat.

Finally, I would ask that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session and that it be published on the OPCW's public website.

Thank you.

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